

AGENCY NAME:	State Ethics Commission		
AGENCY CODE:	R520	SECTION:	107



**Fiscal Year 2013-14
Accountability Report**

SUBMISSION FORM

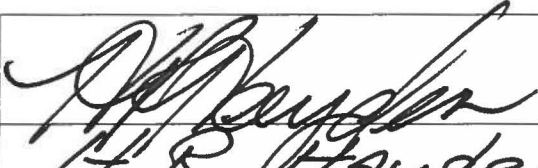
AGENCY MISSION

The State Ethics Commission is an agency of state government responsible for the enforcement of the Ethics Reform Act to restore public trust in government, which is our mission. The Commission's mandate is to ensure compliance with the state's laws on financial disclosure, lobbyist/lobbyist's principal disclosure and campaign disclosure; regulate lobbyists and lobbying organizations; issue advisory opinions interpreting the statute; educate public officeholders and the public on the requirements of the state's ethics laws; conduct criminal and administrative investigations of violations of the state's ethics laws; and prosecute violators either administratively or criminally.

Please identify your agency's preferred contacts for this year's accountability report.

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Email</u>
PRIMARY CONTACT:	Cathy Hazelwood	253-4192	cathy@ethics.sc.gov
SECONDARY CONTACT:	Herbert Hayden	253-4192	herb@ethics.sc.gov

I have reviewed and approved the enclosed FY 2013-14 Accountability Report, which is complete and accurate to the extent of my knowledge.

AGENCY DIRECTOR (SIGN/DATE):	
(TYPE/PRINT NAME):	Herbert Hayden
BOARD/CMSN CHAIR (SIGN/DATE):	
(TYPE/PRINT NAME):	

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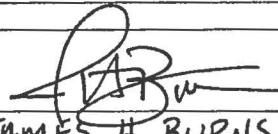
AGENCY DIRECTOR
(SIGN/DATE):

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(TYPE/PRINT NAME):

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BOARD/CMSN CHAIR
(SIGN/DATE):

	9/15/2014
JAMES H. BURNS, Chairman	

(TYPE/PRINT NAME):

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AGENCY’S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

The General Assembly established the State Ethics Commission’s mandate to restore public trust in governmental institutions and the political and governmental processes. The State Ethics Commission’s mission is established by the statutory provisions of the Ethics Reform Act of 1991, Sections 2-17-5, et. seq., and 8-13-100, et. seq., Code of Laws for South Carolina, 1976, as amended. The State Ethics Commission has one program, Administration. This program encompasses four distinct areas of responsibility of the Ethics, Government Accountability and Campaign Reform Act of 1991: lobbying registration and disclosure; ethical rules of conduct; financial disclosure; and campaign practices and disclosure. Three of the four areas are driven by disclosure and now that all disclosure is done electronically, the Ethics Act needs to reflect that change throughout the Act.

Enforcement of the very complex Ethics Reform Act is one of the major challenges before the State Ethics Commission. Citizens’ and state agencies’ concern with public corruption and violations of the state’s ethics laws have caused increased investigative and non-compliance caseloads. The Commission’s mandate requires close analysis of critical issues of which the outcomes have significant impacts on the lives of the affected individuals, to include criminal prosecution. As the number of complaints and forms filed has increased each year, the need for additional staff increases.

This mandate coupled with personnel and equipment needs, and limited funds, are major barriers to the fulfillment of the agency’s mission and goals. The Commission must ensure that the latest technological advances are taken into account to balance the technology versus personnel scale. The security of technology and personnel are major concerns. The Commission collects large quantities of data that must be securely maintained. Commissioners and staff deal with issues with the potential

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to enrage individuals, so personnel security must be a goal and can dovetail with computer security to certain extent.

A highlight of 2014 is having a full Commission. The Commissions nine appointed members began meeting in April for training and conducted their first meeting in May. Seven members are attorneys and two members are retired law enforcement officers.



Type	Goal	Item # Strat	Object	Description
G	1			More efficient and effective enforcement of the S.C. Ethics Laws
S		1.1		Legislative changes to the Ethics Reform Act to reflect the mandated electronic filing of all data.
O			1.1.1	Work with legislative staff to find a sponsor for legislation to only amend those sections of the Ethics Act that reflect a paper filing requirement.
O			1.1.2	Legislation failed on the last day of the 2014 Session. Staff has begun this work for the 2015 legislative session.
S		1.2		Timely investigate complaint matters and conduct complete audits on statewide candidates and other selected races.auditor to ensure full compliance with the campaign finance disclosure requirements.
O			1.2.1	Increase the number of investigators as the number of complaints rises each year and add one
O			1.2.2	Employ a second full-time investigator.
O			1.2.3	Employ an auditor whose sole function is the review of campaign finance reports.
O			1.2.4	Reduce the investigative time by the equitable distribution of complaints between investigators.
O			1.2.5	Review campaign finance reports immediately following deadlines.
G	2			Provide a safe, secure environment for Commissioners, staff, public and all data collected by the Commission.
S		2.1		Create a safe, secure office for staff on a day-to-day basis and Commissioners and the public on meeting days
O			2.1.1	Re-design the office lobby to ensure entry is controlled through a locking system.
O			2.1.2	Re-design the lobby and filing room to provide a waiting area for the many, many complainants, respondents and witnesses who attend Commission meetings.
S		2.2		Ensure the secure collection and retention of all data electronically filed with the Commission, as well as other information received.
O			2.2.1	New computers would utilize the most current security aware design techniques, as well as the most current hardware devices designed to protect computer systems.
O			2.2.2	Secure the premises to ensure that filed complaints remain confidential during the investigation and after depending on the outcome.

